

Inspection of Brambles Primary Academy

Cambridge Road, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire HD1 5BU

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 January 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Early years provision	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils' behaviour in school is exemplary. They move through corridors quietly and sensibly, holding doors open for each other and greeting staff as they pass by. Pupils are polite and remember to say 'please' and 'thank you' throughout the day. There is a culture of high expectations in school, so all staff, including lunchtime supervisors and kitchen staff, make sure that these manners continue wherever pupils are.

Teachers are ambitious for what pupils should know. Pupils are articulate and well spoken. They contribute well to class discussions and use ambitious vocabulary that they have been taught. Pupils talk about what they know about fractions in mathematics or about democracy in ancient Greece with real understanding. In most subjects, their knowledge is building up bit by bit as they move through the school.

Pupils know that they have trusted adults to talk to if they have any concerns. Because of the respect pupils have for each other, friendship problems are rare. If there are issues such as bullying or the use of bad language, staff recognise these and stop them getting worse straight away.

Pupils learn about being safe and responsible citizens. Members of the police force come into school as part of 'Pol Ed' and meet with pupils to improve their understanding of the law. Pupils know about each other's beliefs and celebrate the diversity that is in the school.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

New leaders have recently come to the school and built upon what was working well. All aspects of the school are led well because trustees have a clear view of what is going well and what needs to be improved. Trustees challenge and support leaders to ensure they focus on the right areas and have the expertise to improve them.

Leaders have mapped out what pupils need to know and when. In English, mathematics and science this is very precisely defined at each point in time. In these subjects, pupils build up secure knowledge and can show this in their reading or calculating. In some other subjects, such as art and design or physical education (PE), there is less clarity. Sometimes teachers are not sure exactly what pupils need to remember from each lesson and over time. Pupils are not able to complete their work to the high standard that leaders want in these subjects.

Much of what is successful in school starts in the early years. Staff in the early years are expert in knowing what children need in order to gain important skills such as writing their name or counting up to 10. Teachers show children how to do this, and children cannot then wait to practise it on their own or in a small group. The Reception classroom buzzes with excitement and purpose. Children stay focused on

what they are doing for long periods because what they are asked to do matches the curriculum so well.

Children in Reception start learning to read through a phonics programme straight away. Staff show children how to pronounce the sounds of letters to read words. Then children learn how to write and spell words. Staff in other year groups build on this by helping pupils to practise pronouncing sounds and reading words that they know and then introducing new ones. Expectations are equally high for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Pupils with SEND are keeping up with where they need to be because teachers are skilled in breaking down what they need to do into even smaller chunks. Pupils with SEND who need to practise different sounds are given sessions that focus on precisely what they need.

Leaders have been clear on what teachers should do in lessons to ensure pupils remember what they have been taught. Teachers regularly revise what pupils have learned in the past. They give pupils opportunities to discuss what they think. Pupils use these opportunities well because they have the knowledge and vocabulary that they need. For example, pupils remember important information about different historical periods because they have had lots of chances to revisit this learning and make connections. When pupils are not sure about something, teachers spot this straight away and give pupils an extra burst of teaching to help them gain the knowledge that they need.

Teachers who are new to the profession are given the help and training that they need. Staff across school appreciate their 'toolbox sessions' on topics such as behaviour and supporting pupils with SEND. Staff have been trained to support pupils who are struggling to regulate their emotions. Pupils who have struggled to stay focused on their work in the past can now concentrate on what they are doing for longer.

Too many pupils miss school regularly. Leaders have identified this and have been clearer with parents about the importance of school attendance. Leaders have brought in new systems to get pupils to attend more and on time. Leaders know that there is more to do in this area.

Staff have a clear understanding of the needs of the pupils who they work with. Staff teach pupils with SEND the important skills that they need, such as helping those with writing difficulties with their finger strength. Pupils who are new to the school and do not speak English are given help or resources to help them quickly pick up the language they need and make friends.

Pupils enjoy the range of clubs that are on offer. They learn how to form healthy relationships and the importance of showing respect to all other people. However, they have some gaps in their knowledge around aspects such as democracy or culture. Pupils have not had the range of experiences, such as educational visits, that would help cement their knowledge of these concepts.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff have a very good understanding of the local context and any risks that might be more likely. All staff can list the specific concerns to look out for and know what to do if they see something that they think needs passing on. Leaders respond to any concerns quickly. Trustees and trust leaders make regular checks on what leaders are doing in school and provide extra resources or training for leaders and staff where needed. The pre-employment checks that leaders carry out are robust and are regularly checked by members of the local advisory board and trustees.

Pupils are very well informed about how to safe online. They know not to share their password or to talk to people who they do not know.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- In some foundation subjects, such as art and design and PE, the knowledge that pupils need to remember has not been sufficiently defined. Teachers are sometimes unsure what it is that pupils need to remember from the activity that they are doing. Leaders should ensure that all subjects have the precisely defined knowledge that pupils need to remember, and that this information is well understood by teachers.
- Too many pupils are persistently absent from school. They are not benefiting from the good quality of education in the school because they miss so much. Leaders should ensure that the attendance policy is clearly enforced and families get the support that they need to ensure these pupils attend more regularly.
- Pupils do not get enough opportunities to have educational visits or wider experiences that would contribute to their understanding of different concepts such as democracy or how different cultures celebrate. Some pupils have a limited understanding of these concepts. Leaders should design and implement more thoughtful opportunities for pupils to experience aspects of the wider offer for personal development.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	145236
Local authority	Kirklees
Inspection number	10255576
Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	258
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Mick McKay
Principal	Matt Carbutt (Executive Principal) Angela Inns (Head of School)
Website	www.bramblesprimaryacademy.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school was opened as a free school in September 2018. It is part of South Pennines Academies Trust.
- The executive principal and the head of school both started at the school in September 2022 and both were previously at another school within the trust.
- Currently, the school has year groups from Reception to Year 4.
- The school currently uses one registered alternative provider.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the executive principal, the head of school, the chair of the trust, members of the local advisory board and the director of standards for the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics, history, and art and design. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- More information was gathered about the quality of education by sampling pupils' work and discussing with subject leaders about PE and science.
- Inspectors met with the special educational needs coordinator and visited some pupils with education, health and care plans in their lessons.
- Inspectors spoke to some parents and carers to gather their views and took note of the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View.
- Staff and pupils were also able to give their views through online surveys, and inspectors spoke to staff and pupils in groups and individually.

Inspection team

Matthew Knox, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lee Wilson

Ofsted Inspector

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